

P 141128Z JAN 10 ZDK  
FM AMEMBASSY ABUJA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8009  
INFO ECOWAS COLLECTIVE  
AMCONSUL LAGOS  
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK  
HQ USAFRICOM STUTTGART GE  
DIA WASHINGTON DC  
CIA WASHINGTON DC  
NSC WASHINGTON DC

S E C R E T ABUJA 000038

NOFORN

STATE FOR AF/FO, AF/W, AF/RSA, DRL, INR/AA;

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/14/2019

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PINR](#) [PINS](#) [OVIP](#) [NI](#)

SUBJECT: FOREIGN MINISTER RECEIVES NO INTEL OR SECURITY BRIEFINGS,  
CHANGES TONE ON TSA ISSUES

Classified By: Ambassador Robin Sanders for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (S) Ambassador spoke to Nigerian Foreign Minister Ojo Maduekwe on January 10 regarding his strident views and calls of discrimination related to the recent reports that Nigeria is one of 14 "countries of interest" on the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) list following the December 25, 2009, attempted bombing of a U.S. aircraft and his demands that Nigeria be immediately removed from the TSA list. Ambassador noted that the GON should focus on how we can work together against terrorism and more importantly what role Nigeria can and should play as a global partner. She added that his stance had been unhelpful and that we needed to find a way to move forward in a more constructive dialogue on this issue. Of note, the Ambassador mentioned, in general terms, that the U.S. Government has shared on numerous occasions, as we do with many other nations, information showing linkages in Nigeria with outside extremist groups, and that thus far the GON had not been willing to acknowledge the potential of such connections. She pointed out that in this day and age no country was immune to terrorism or a delusion that elements of their society could not have had links with terrorist groups.

¶2. (S) The Foreign Minister reiterated that the December 25 suspect had spent most of his life outside of Nigeria and therefore was not inculcated into Nigerian society, as a "true Nigerian would never behave in such a way". Ambassador conceded this point, but stressed that this was a simplistic way of looking at this global problem. Even if this was the case, it does not mean that outside extremists do not have links in Nigeria, restating that information had been shared between security services in this regard.

¶3. (S) A less blustery Foreign Minister then admitted that he does not receive intelligence and security briefings from his government and was unaware of these issues or even this potential. He said he would take note of this and also engage his own government now on his need to have both security and intelligence briefings. Maduekwe stated that, if he had been aware of some of these things, his posture may have been a little different. On the "countries of interest" issue, he asked about the "haste" in which the USG reacted to putting Nigeria on the list without a dialogue first. Ambassador noted that we needed to move extremely quickly in our national security interest to thwart anything else that might have been planned. In addition, she added there are a number of things that Nigeria needs to do which we are willing to help and partner with in order to improve airport security. She hoped Nigeria would work with us in this regard, particularly by acknowledging the potential for these linkages. The Foreign Minister said he would take a new track in light of this better understanding of the circumstances.

¶4. (S) On the issue of the memorandum of understanding to permit assignment of air marshals on U.S.- bound flights, Maduekwe said he was pushing to obtain approval and that there was reasonably good support for this action within the GON cabinet. However, he admitted that the bureaucratic hold out was National Security Advisor (NSA) General (retired) Mukhtar who insisted that allowing U.S. marshals on QGeneral (retired) Mukhtar who insisted that allowing U.S. marshals on flights was contrary to Nigerian law. Attorney General Aondoakaa,

however, has disagreed and supports the MOU for the marshals. Thus, there remains a question as to whether Aondoakaa's or Mukhtar's view will prevail (see septels for DepSec Lute's meetings with the Vice President, NSA, and Foreign Minister).

15. (S) Comment: The realization that there could be other outside extremist links in Nigeria seemed to initially be a foreign concept to the Foreign Minister. He had not fathomed outside links and seemed to be in the dark on security issues in general, but admitted by the end of the conversation that this potential existed in any country in the world, and that, of course, Nigeria would not be immune. He agreed to look at the issue differently and to move forward in the relationship, seeing recent events as an "opportunity" to improve the country's aviation security systems.

SANDERS